

I claim:

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1.

In combination with a vehicle having an elongated cargo supporting bed having two metal side rails, having upper and lower ends, running longitudinally along outer side areas of the bed and spaced laterally therefrom to define pocket areas therebetween, comprising:

a generally Y-shaped winch assembly including a substantially vertically disposed stem portion, having upper and lower ends; a pair of upstanding, horizontally spaced-apart plates mounted on the upper end of said stem portion; a tie-down strap receiver rotatably mounted on and extending between said plates; and a winch ratchet mechanism operatively connected to said tie-down strap receiver for winding one end of a tie-down strap therearound;

said stem portion having a hook member movably mounted thereon which is adapted to selectively releasably engage the lower end of one of said side rails, when said stem portion of said winch assembly is inserted downwardly into said pocket area, to anchor said winch assembly.

2.

The combination of claim 1 wherein said hook member is movable between latched and unlatched positions and wherein a spring urges said hook member towards its latched position.

3.

1 The combination of claim 1 wherein said hook member is movable between latched and unlatched positions and further including means for urging said hook member towards its latched position.

4.

5 The combination of claim 2 wherein said hook member is mechanically moved from its said latched position to its said unlatched position when said stem portion is inserted downwardly into said pocket area.

5.

10 In combination with a vehicle having an elongated cargo supporting bed having two metal side rails, having upper and lower ends, running longitudinally along outer side areas of the bed and spaced laterally therefrom to define pocket areas therebetween which are defined by upstanding stand-off plates, having upper and lower ends, extending outwardly from the side areas of the bed to the associate side rails, comprising:

15 a generally Y-shaped winch assembly including a substantially vertically disposed stem portion, having upper and lower ends; a pair of upstanding, horizontally spaced-apart plates mounted on the upper end of said stem portion; a tie-down strap receiver rotatably mounted on and extending between said plates; and a winch ratchet mechanism operatively connected to said tie-down strap receiver for winding one end of a tie-down strap therearound;

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1 said stem portion having a hook member movably mounted thereon which is adapted to
selectively releasably engage the lower end of said stand-off plates, when said
stem portion of said winch assembly is inserted downwardly into said pocket
area, to anchor said winch assembly.

5 6.

In combination with a vehicle having an elongated cargo supporting bed having
two metal side rails, having upper and lower ends, running longitudinally along outer
side areas, having upper and lower ends, of the bed and spaced laterally therefrom to
define pocket areas therebetween, comprising:

10 a generally Y-shaped winch assembly including a substantially vertically disposed stem
portion having upper and lower ends; a pair of upstanding, horizontally spaced-
apart plates mounted on the upper end of said stem portion; a tie-down strap
receiver rotatably mounted on and extending between said plates; and a winch
15 ratchet mechanism operatively connected to said tie-down strap receiver for
winding one end of a tie-down strap therearound;

said stem portion having a hook member movably mounted thereon which is adapted to
selectively releasably engage the lower end of one of said side areas when said
20 stem portion of said winch assembly is inserted downwardly into said pocket
area, to anchor said winch assembly.

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7.

In combination with a vehicle having an elongated cargo supporting bed, comprising:

a generally Y-shaped winch assembly including a substantially vertically disposed stem portion, having upper and lower ends; a pair of upstanding, horizontally spaced-apart plates mounted on the upper end of said stem portion; a tie-down strap receiver rotatably mounted on and extending between said plates; and a winch ratchet mechanism operatively connected to said tie-down strap receiver for winding one end of a tie-down strap therearound;

said stem portion having a hook member movably mounted thereon which is adapted to selectively releasably engage a lower edge portion of the bed, when said stem portion of said winch assembly is inserted downwardly into an opening formed in the bed.

8.

The combination of claim 7 wherein said hook member is movable between latched and unlatched positions and wherein a spring urges said hook member towards its latched position.

9.

The combination of claim 8 wherein said hook member is mechanically moved from its said latched position to its said unlatched position when said stem portion is inserted downwardly into the opening formed in the bed.

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ADD B1 >